

520 SIMILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND  
EEFOEMEE

formity with oar nature, and so near to us that a child can touch it with the hand. I will not fail, then, in my duty to justice which orders me to praise that which is praiseworthy. I will not hide the truth beneath cowardly silence. Why, indeed, should we be silent ? Are they, his slanderers, silent \$ I will say only what is necessary before this bier, but I will say all that is necessary."

At this point M. Anatole France paused, interrupted by repeated cries of "Bravo!" Those who were gathered around the tribune had listened in attentive silence to the earlier part of his discourse, but from this point almost every sentence was punctuated by applause. The crowd in the cemetery was so dense, stretching away to the very gates, that thousands were unable to hear a word of the speech, and the " Bravos!" which rang out from those who were more fortunately placed, naturally excited the others, whom the police restrained with considerable difficulty. Meantime M. Anatole France was continuing:

" Having to recall the struggle upon which Zola entered in the cause of truth and justice, is it possible for me to preserve silence respecting those who were bent on ruining the cause of an innocent man, those who felt that if he should be saved, they would be lost, and who with all the desperate audacity of fear therefore strove to overwhelm him. How can I remove them from your gaze when I have to show you Zola rising, weak and unarmed, "before them ? Can I remain silent about their lies 1 That would

mean silence as to his heroic rectitude. Can I remain silent about their crimes ? That would mean silence as to his virtues. Can I remain silent about the outrages and slanders with which they pursued him? That would mean silence as to his reward and honours. Can I remain silent about their shame\*? That woxild mean silence as to his glory\* "No I I will speak out.